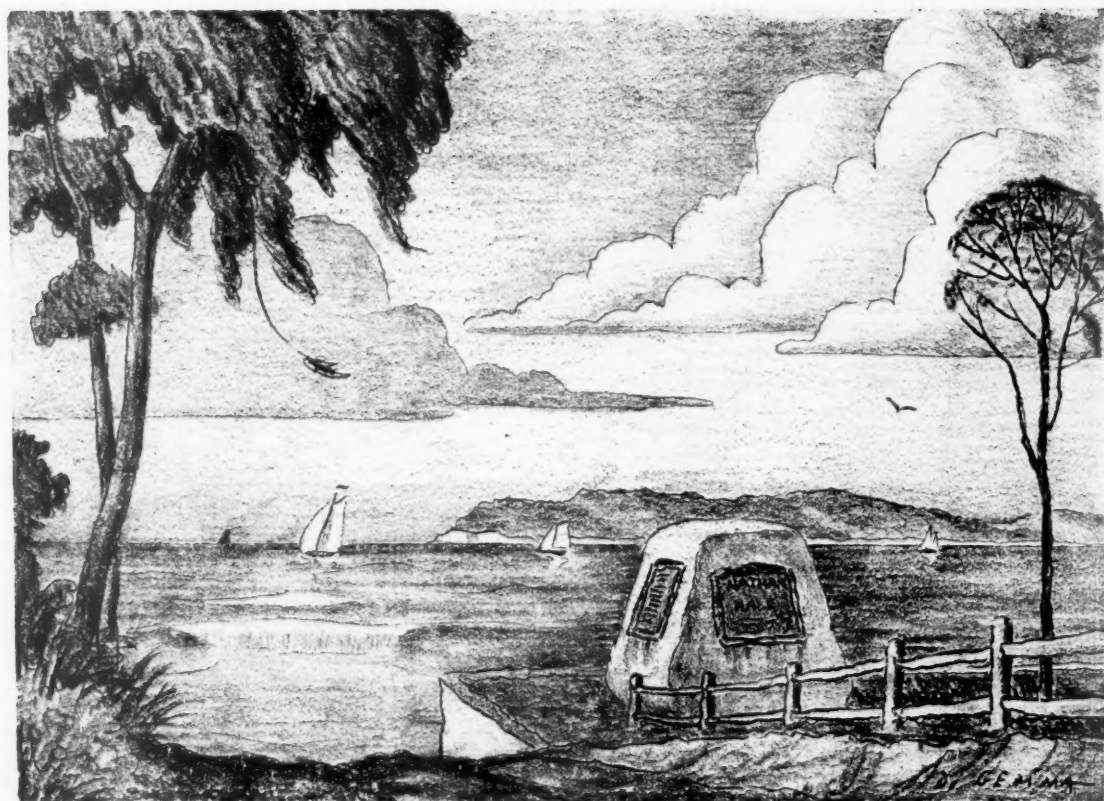


LONG ISLAND FORUM



Nathan Hale Monument, Halesite, Huntington

Joseph Di Gemma, Artist

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**THE
 LONG ISLAND
 FORUM**

Published Monthly at
 AMITYVILLE, N. Y.

FOR LONG ISLANDERS EVERYWHERE
 Entered as second-class matter May 11, 1947, at the
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Contributing Editors

Clarence A. Wood, LL.M., Ph.D.
 Malcolm M. Willey, Ph.D.
 John C. Huden, Ph.D.

Tel. AMityville 4-0554

Halesite's Name

Halesite on the shore of Hunt-
 ington town is well named. Here
 is where Nathan Hale, American
 spy and martyr of the Revolution,
 landed in September 1776, some
 days prior to his capture by the
 British and his execution by hang-
 ing at the age of 21.

The cover illustration was hand-
 etched by Artist Di Gemma from
 his own original work. Reprodu-
 tions 9 1/4 x 13 inches in 16 x 20
 inch mats, ready for framing,
 hand-etched and hand-printed in
 original colors may be obtained at
 \$5 each by addressing the artist
 direct, Joseph P. DiGemma, 74
 Park Lane, Massapequa.

* * *

First Sight of Sea

My great-nephew, Walter W.
 Pyper Jr. who lives in Council
 Bluffs, last summer won a \$1500
 scholarship to the Hill School at
 Pottstown, Pa. He is 16, and we
 had never met until he came for
 two nights with me in late March.

Not only had he never seen his
 great-aunt but he had only
 glimpsed the ocean from atop the
 Empire State Building, so I had
 the fun of introducing him to the
 Jones Beach surf. The day we
 went there it closely resembled the
 breakers and background (plus
 gulls) in Mr. DiGemma's illu-
 stration of Mr. J. D. Smith's "Listen
 to the Surf" (April Forum).

(Miss) Marion F. Overton,
 Flushing.

* * *

Founders' Day, Southampton

On June 12, Founders' Day, the
 Southampton Historical Museum
 will be opened for the season with
 an exhibit featuring American
 glass of all periods. On July 10 an
 exhibit will feature historic and
 early American quilt work. The
 Museum is operated and sponsored
 by the Southampton Colonial So-
 ciety.

* * *

That was a splendid piece of
 research in the April Forum on
 "Powell's Purchase Revisited",
 performed by Iris and Alonzo
 Gibbs. Jesse Merritt (Nassau
 County Historian).

Continued on page 110

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Amagansett's Judge Conkling

ALFRED CONKLING and his pal Charley Jones of Amagansett, as boys in the guise of highwaymen once held up a local stage at gun-point and gave its passengers a real fright. Thereafter when the village schoolmaster wished to censure a boy he would often say: "You are as bad as Alfred Conkling and Charley Jones."

But bad boy Conkling at least mended his ways and became a prominent figure in the legal profession and in early American politics. More than that, he sired a Conkling who later was seriously considered as a contender for the Presidency of the United States.

Alfred Conkling was born Oct. 12, 1789 in a large house framed with timbers from the virgin forests of East Hampton town. The old structure was demolished in the middle 1870's. His uncle Isaac Conkling had previously lived in the house for a long time.

Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood

The Conklings, like their East End contemporaries for the most part, obtained their livelihood from the soil and from the sea. The tilth and fertility of the sandy fields they improved by the use of the finny inhabitants of the surrounding waters. Into the structure of their habitations and furnishings oftentimes was incorporated the flotsam and jetson tossed upon the surrounding shores.

Alfred Conkling became the first professional man in six generations of early Island Conklings. Beginning with John Conkelyne who died at Southold April 6th, 1694, and whose grave is marked in that ancient village's old cemetery, the Conklings were primarily devoted to agriculture.

Ananias Conkling of the next generation became the father of Jeremiah, who in 1670 bought what was called the "nine score acre purchase"

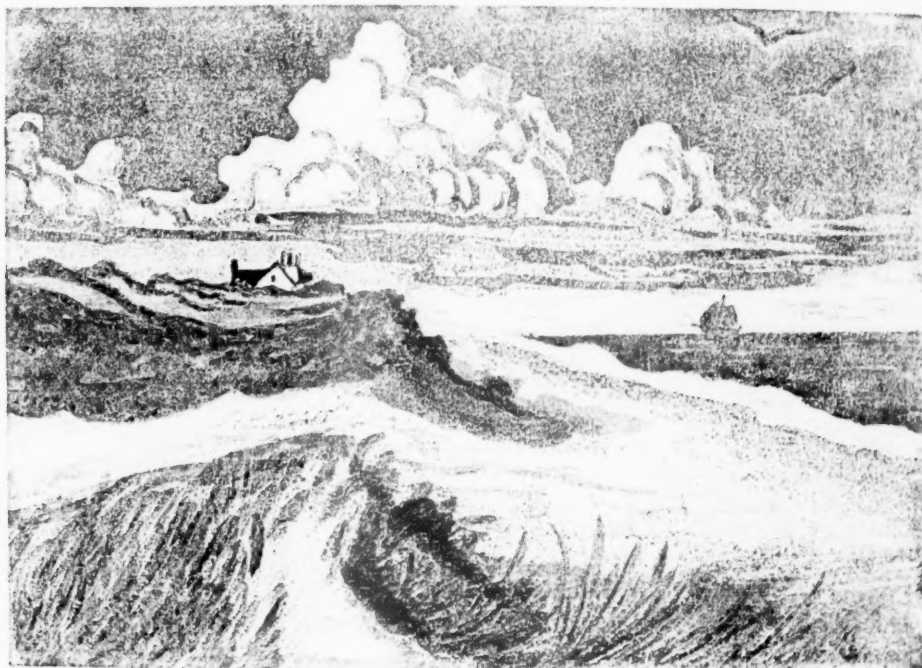
situated between Fort Pond and Great Pond in East Hampton town.

Jeremiah was survived by two sons of whom Lewis located in Amagansett in 1700. He married Mary Stratton who lived nearby and they left two sons and four daughters. Lineous Conkling, one of the sons, had two sons, Isaac and Benjamin, the latter being born at Amagansett in 1757.

There was a classical streak in the nature of Benjamin Conkling for he taught himself Latin. He married Esther Hand of the numerous East Hampton Hand family, mention of whose name prompts the repetition of Judge Hedges' pun: "The people of East Hampton have their Hands for usefulness, Parsons for guides and Hedges for defense."

Benjamin and Esther Hand Conkling had three boys and two girls. Alfred, the eldest son, attended the Amagansett district school.

After the parson of the vil-



Two Mile Hollow Near Amagansett.

Joseph Di Gemma, Artist

lage church had put him through a preparatory course of study Alfred entered Union College at Schenectady in 1806 then recently established. In the same class was John Howard Payne, native New Yorker but of East Hampton stock.

Conkling graduated in 1810 at a time when Payne was treading the theatrical boards in the principal Atlantic Coast cities, having ended his academic training at mid-stream. Conkling became a lawyer and practiced first for several years at Canajoharie in upstate New York. In 1818 at the age of 29 he was elected district attorney of Montgomery County.

While acting in that capacity he prosecuted a prisoner charged with murder. Both prisoner and district attorney were members of the Masonic order which in that period figured actively in state politics.

While the prosecuting attorney was addressing the trial jury in a summation of the evidence the prisoner at the bar made the distress signal of the Masonic order.

Conkling resented the attempt to divert the course of justice and immediately fore-swore membership in the organization.

In 1820 he was elected to Congress as an anti-Jackson Democrat. Five years later President John Quincy Adams appointed him United States District Attorney for the Northern District of New York which position he filled for 27 years.

President Fillmore afterwards made him minister to Mexico. Union College, his alma mater, conferred upon him the degree of LL.D. This son of Amagansett lived in mature years in the intellectual atmosphere of the State Capitol. There he was associated with many of the great of his time. Among his contemporaries who visited his home were Chancellors Sanford and Kent, Governor

Continued on page 108

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Hello Girls of Long Ago

John Tooker

THE telephone has played an important part in developing Long Island as a homeland and vacationer's paradise, and the young women who operated switchboards on rural Long Island over fifty years ago deserve a great deal of credit for the manner in which they served their patrons, and built up good will for the New York & New Jersey Telephone Company. They worked alone in most cases, without a supervisor or chief operator, and the wire chief miles away from them, so that the responsibility for the operation of the office was all theirs.

It took the Telephone Company about twenty years after the instruments were patented to reach the east end of Long Island with their wires. They entered Greenport about 1895 when a small switchboard was installed in a local drugstore, and the proprietor would send out a messenger for the called party if he lived or worked nearby.

Many L. I. villages, even the small ones, had their own switchboards in the early 1900s, which were later grouped together in large exchanges housed in special buildings in central locations. The first switchboards did not have indicating lights as they do today, but a small metal tag would drop down when the subscriber turned the crank on the side of the huge wooden box which was screwed to the wall of his office or store. The operator would usually replace the drops, as the tags were called, by poking them back in place with her pencil.

The first telephone subscribers were mostly business and professional men for it was a long time before the telephone became the household necessity that it is today. A Babylon newspaper boasted, with some pride, that there

were 120 subscribers in that village in 1902.

It is not necessary to discuss the many inventions and improvements that have made the telephone the efficient means of communication that it is today, and brought communities, and for that matter the whole world, into closer relationship. It is more interesting to write of the great

affairs and the proprietors of local hotels would send in lunches to her when she was at work.

The subscribers were less critical of the operators and more loyal to them, perhaps, than they are today as the following incident will show. A telephone inspector once entered a business place in an eastern L. I. village, told the proprietor who he was and asked to use the phone. The proprietor stepped to the phone, called the operator and told her the inspector was there. He then turned to the inspector and told him they had a good operator and they did not want anyone to interfere with her. The inspector who intended to listen in on the operator to see if she connected and disconnected promptly, went away convinced that his usefulness was ended in that village that day.

Many elderly people at that time would not use the telephone or even answer the ring, and that was the case with the wife of a certain country doctor. When he left his office to call on patients he would notify the operator and she would take care of any messages that came in during his absence, and relay them to him when he returned. That operator fell from her bicycle one day and injured her kneecap so that she had to operate with the injured member stretched out on a chair. The doctor whose calls she had taken care of, attended her, and when she asked for the bill he told that it had been paid long ago by her kindness in taking care of his calls.

There was very little night service in those early years and some offices provided a couch for the operator and a gong was connected in the bell circuit to wake her if a call came in late at night.

Girls who had been trained in the busier offices on the



Operator of 1900

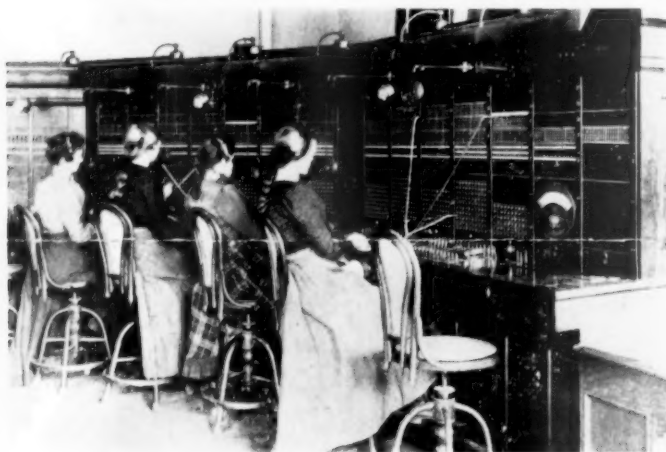
change that has taken place in the relations between the operators and the public. Fifty years ago that relation was a much more intimate one than it is today, for then every telephone user in the rural villages knew the name of the operator and often used it. She was invited to community

east end of L. I. were often sent out into the country villages as the experience of one young woman is a sample. She had been trained in Richmond Hill in the fall of 1901, and worked in the following offices in succeeding years: Astoria, Flushing, Jamaica, Floral Park, Hempstead, Rockville Center, Babylon, Blue Point, Patchogue, Quogue and

Waldorf-Astoria, The Manhattan, and the Holland House.

She arrived in Garden City to find active preparations going on to make the hotel the headquarters for those who were to manage the Third Vanderbilt Cup Race which was soon to be run off.

An elimination race to select an American contender was run off on Sept. 22, 1906.



Brooklyn's Bedford Central Office of 1899

Southampton. She also worked in two well known L. I. hotels, the old wooden Long Beach which was destroyed by fire in 1907 and the more modern Garden City which had been recently built to replace the original one erected by A. T. Stewart in 1874 and which had also been burned down.

When the Long Beach Hotel closed for the season early in the fall of 1906, the telephone operator previously referred to was sent to the main offices of The New York and New Jersey Telephone Co., in Cortland St., N. Y. City, and there she was told to go to three New York hotels (all famous at that time), observe the telephone operating methods in use, then go to the Garden City Hotel and put into practice the best features of the operating methods that she had observed. To carry out those instructions she spent several days in each of the following hotels: the old

The Cup Race was run off on October 6, 1906, a distance of 297 miles made in several laps over the Long Island roads in that vicinity, and was won by Wagner of the French team in 3 minutes, 18 and 2/5 seconds ahead of his nearest competitor, at the average speed of 61.88 miles per hour. Seventeen cars started and an estimated crowd of 250,000 to 300,000 witnessed the race. Two persons were killed and many injured either at the course or on the way to it.

The activities of the Race Committee, and of the newspaper reporters trying to file their stories of the Race provided plenty of excitement for those in the Garden City Hotel. The dangers inherent in auto racing over open country roads, as shown by the deaths and injuries in that race, put a damper on such sport and it was a long time before another race was run.

The New York & New Jer-

Continued on Page 108

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Trap Fishing 1860 to 1950

AS a boy I was brought up in the Southold Town fishing community of East Marion.

Two-thirds of the citizens of the village were trap fishermen — quite a profitable industry there for ninety years or more. It began about 1860 when the shore fishermen gave up drawnets which were operated in the bays, principally for menhaden, used for fertilizer, also for their oil. These bunkers (so called by the fishermen) were later pursued by sailing vessels, then large fishing steamers using a purse seine and carrying their catch into the fish-factories scattered from Maine to Cape Fear, N. C.

The edible fish were left for the trap fishermen to catch. They first set "pounds", much more complicated than the "traps" that soon took their place. The cost of a trap was much less than that of a pound. Of course the depth of the water governed the cost in either case.

The ones set in the shallow bays cost approximately \$300 while those set in Fort Pond Bay to a depth of 60 ft. cost \$1,200 or more. The fisherman soon found that he could afford to set two traps for every pound he had previously operated.

As is known to many Long Islanders, the trap is composed of a leader, inner-pounds, tunnel and the box, all made of twine, factory knitted into squares called meshes from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in size.

The leader was a long piece of fish net $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch mesh, running from the shore line to the wings (called inner pounds). These inner pounds led the fish into a tunnel, which opened up into a large square enclosure, with a small mesh seine on bottom and sides. The fish swam around and around the outside of this square in their

Eugene S. Griffing

efforts to escape, but failed to see the very small tunnel through which they had passed in entering the box. They were caught, and waited for the fisherman to lift this part of the net to take them out. When sorted over, only the edible fish were saved and the others were thrown overboard or used for lobster pot bait.

The leader and all parts of the trap were held in place by means of pulley lines running

and sent over from New London, Ct., to Fort Pond Bay. The pine being so buoyant, the pointed end was carried down to the very bottom by means of a heavy lead weight, then pumped into the bottom 6 ft. or more, with a forced water pump. This water under pressure was carried down through a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch galvanized pipe tied to the side of the 6 x 6; both the weight and the pipe were hauled back to the surface when the stake was in place.



Fishing Boats at Greenport

From Watercolor by Cyril A. Lewis

through a hole in the stake which had been firmly driven into the bottom of the ocean or bay.

Many fishermen thought that more fish could be caught in deeper waters, but there was a limit to the length of the oak and hickory stakes. It took the courage and inventive ability of Captain E. B. Tutthill to overcome the difficulty by using 6 x 6 L. L. Y. Pine joist. These he spliced together, with iron bands at the point of splice.

The joists were purchased,

These stakes were not rigid enough to stand against wind and tide, therefore they were held in place by guy lines running off to heavy anchors.

If memory serves me right, Captain Tutthill made one catch of bluefish which sold for over \$1,000.

Naturally this started something. Captain Isaac Edwards soon followed suit. I was captain of his smack Elmira at the time, for the owners of most of the large outfits lived in small cottages on the beach

Continued on page 109

Reminders

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Judge Conkling

Continued from Page 104

Throop, a descendant of one of Southold's ministers; Thurlow Weed, Judge Smith Thompson of the nation's highest court and Presidents John Quincy Adams and Martin Van Buren.

Judge Conkling was recognized as an authority in jurisprudence and on literary subjects. He delivered many addresses and wrote several treatises on the law. On May 5, 1812, he married Eliza Cockburn, daughter of James Cockburn, a civil engineer. She was known as "the belle of Mohawk Valley," and was famous for her beauty.

From her third son, Senator Roscoe Conkling, inherited much of his physical charm which attracted the attention of ambitious Kate Chase, daughter of Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase. Judge Conkling died at Utica Feb. 5, 1874, in his 85th year and was buried in Albany where his more famous son was born.

Books Wanted

Thompson's Long Island, 2d edition (2 vols.) Also Pelletreau's Smithtown Records. Address L. I. Forum, Amityville.

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Hello Girls

Continued from page 106

sey Telephone Company and its successor The New York Telephone Company have enjoyed as large a share of public good as perhaps any public utility. We may well wonder how much of the foundation for that good will was laid by those efficient L. I. women of a half century ago, many of whom having helped make telephone history, are now living in peaceful retirement.

For those interested in identifying Long Island's trees and shrubs, **BOTH WILD AND CULTIVATED**, Prof. A. H. Graves' recently published and excellent "Illustrated Guide to Trees and Shrubs" is indispensable. For your copy, send a \$4 check to Killian's, Box 63, Water Mill, N. Y.

Joseph Smith Ancestry

Wanted Ancestry of Joseph Smith, born New York State 1789, Married Hannah Barker (born Connecticut 1790). Children: Samuel, John, Levi, Jane, Cynthia, etc. Lived for a time in Chenango County, New York, and later in Boone County, Illinois. Please address, H. H. S., care of Long Island Forum, Amityville, N. Y.

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Trapfishing

Continued from page 107

near their nets, employing young men as crew members to sail the vessels, men who could work all day and part of the night in order to get the fish into Fulton Market quickly. The fish were iced down in wooden boxes holding about 240 lbs.

The first shipping port was Orient where the steamer Shelter Island, and later the Shinnecock and other vessels took the fish to New York via Long Island Sound. The LIRR soon made a bid for this profitable freight and many of the shippers docked in Greenport, because the railroad was much quicker. Quite a bit of rivalry existed between the Steamship Company and the Railroad Company. The LIRR procured a small steam vessel named the Kelpie to go out as a tugboat and tow in all those smacks which became becalmed. The train was held for all late shippers.

The Shelter Island on her way to New York would stop alongside any smack in the Lay if the Captain thought she was well loaded; otherwise, he showed no interest in her signals and passed proudly on. The Black Eagle was most often favored, especially if her load line was well under.

Captain Mark Griffing of the Kelpie played no such favorites so the LIRR became very popular and took the lead. In later years Promised Land and Fort Pond Bay became excellent shipping ports, and occasionally New London.

A description of the fishing smacks of this period may be of interest to the younger generation. They were staunch wooden vessels from 35 to 60 feet over all, sloop-rigged, jib and mainsail, with gaff and jib topsails for light breezes, centerboards, with the exception of the Black Eagle, Minnie T. Rackett, Ariadne, the Hattie T. Angler, Leila T. and Viola were keel-built. The cabins were aft and had berths

for four to eight men, depending on the vessel. Cooking was also done in this cabin. A forecabin just back of the samson post was used as a storage for spare rigging and occasionally for extra sleeping space.

The East Marion smacks and their owner - captains were: Amy, Joseph A. Clark; Helen, Clinton and Grant Rackett; Trackless, Henry Rackett; Grampus, Daniel and F. J. Tuthill; Wm. T. Seward, F. J. Tuthill; Ariadne, John Vail and F. J. Tuthill; Minnie T. Rackett, Eugene S. Griffing and Everett L. Bennett; Allie Rodgers, Charles H. Gardiner; Louise, W. H. Tuthill and son Irving; also A. H. Tuthill and son A. Wilfred; Cora Griffing, Frank Rackett; Lauretta, Charles Brown and son Willis; Elmira, Isaac B. Edwards.

Also from East Marion: Adelaide T., Edwin B. Tuthill; Annie T., Charles Mallinson and E. B. Tuthill; Flora, William Leek and son Clarence; Viola, Clarence Leek; Resolute, Everett H. and Ernest L. Vail; Virginia Bedell, David

and William Patterson; Madeline, George Udell and sons Bert and Harry.

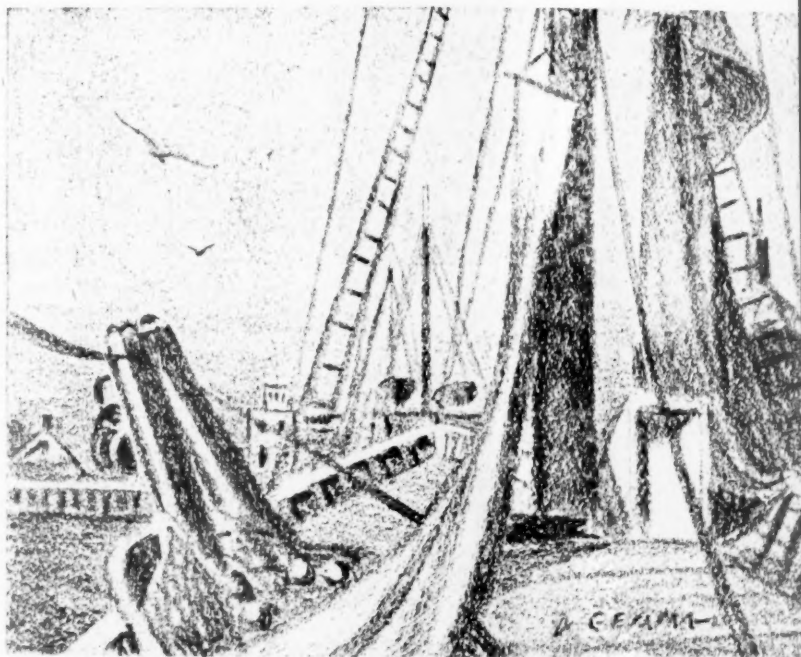
The Orient smacks and owner-captains were: Leila T., Roswell Tuthill and sons Charles and Lyle; Black Eagle, George M. Vail, nephew Charles and son Gilson; New York, Jeremiah Vail and son Hollis; Angler, Philip Tabor and son; Saucy Maid, Alvah Brooks and sons.

There was also the Hattie of Greenport, David Tuthill, and the Maria D. of Springs, Frank Parsons.

The western side of Gardiners Island faces on Gardiners Bay, while the easterly side is very rugged with a long sweep from Block Island Sound, very rough at times and rather hard on the fishermen's gear. This is also true of Fort Pond Bay, while at Gin Beach it was so rough at times that it was almost impossible to keep the traps in position during the fall season.

The risk was much greater in these locations, but usually paid off in larger catches of fish. Talk about risk capital

Continued on page 114



Aboard East End Fishing Boat

Joseph Di Gemma, Artist

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Letters From Our Readers

Continued from page 102

That Bicycle Craze

The recent articles appearing in our Forum concerning bicycle days of fifty years ago take many readers back over Memory Lane to that era. It was far more than a craze as has been suggested. Linked up with a desire for new and better roads that followed, it enabled City Dwellers to better discover the joys and beauty of rural life. It literally took many off their feet. It provided healthful recreation as well and provided a new outlook on life.

One of the earliest roads to be improved was the Merrick being macadamized from Jamaica to Freeport—Coney Island cycle path from Prospect Park to Coney Island — the latter for Cyclists only. The side paths in Suffolk County came soon after at 50c toll for a season's use.

The Merrick being quite level was very popular with pedal-pushers from New York and Brooklyn; being crowded on weekends and holidays. Century Runs many riders started, few finished.

The Bedford-Rest, corner of Bedford Avenue and Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn was the assembling place and starting point. Route generally followed: Eastern Parkway, Liberty Avenue, Rockaway Road, Locust Avenue, Jamaica Avenue. Take your choice — all had bad spots in the early days when dust and sand were eaten and Belgium Blocks seemed like velvet.

With the great number of riders came the demands for food and drink. Very popular was Billy Smith's and Tom West's, both at Valley Stream — great numbers at the latter place. 'Twas here we saw the Bloomer Girls for the first time. How Horrid? The costumes and the idea of women on men's bikes, I mean shocked many.

The riders were so numerous when passing through Lynbrook that pedestrians had to wait for some time before a break in the ranks permitted crossing. Teatotalers made for the pump at Floyd-Jones place, Massapequa. Those that could make it imbibed from the Vanderbilt Well at Oakdale.

George E. Hart,
Wading River.

Continued on next page

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Letters From Our Readers

Continued from page 110

Schoolmaster to Farmer

Something like twenty years before George H. Wells became Southold's "Biggest Farmer", he was the Principal of District School No. 8, in the Hedge Pasture section of East Cutchogue. (About 1882).

Besides acting as Principal, he taught the Do-re-mi beginnings of vocal culture (with a pitch fork), all the other classes and grades, in the one room school, and tended the old, wood-burning stove that was supposed to heat the place—and didn't. For those varied services he received about thirty tax free dollars per month, which then seemed to me a munificent wage.

I "look" music, along with other distasteful subjects, because they were there to take, and I had no choice, or voice in the matter. That I had no 'voice' for music, was proven later when I was unceremoniously dropped from a cast of youthful singers, rehearsing for Children's Day Sunday School exercises.

All the others were on one key, and I had one of my own. Likely, I would have done better, had I waited a few years, and taken up Agriculture, under Farmer Wells. Kind regards to Dr. Wood and Editor Bailey.

George W. Case,
Peconic

* * *

"Colonial Huntington 1653-1800"

The above is the name of an interesting, well written pamphlet of 100 pages, written in connection with the town's Tercentenary by Zell Morris Gould and Henrietta M. Klaber, with many fine illustrations by Mary Helene Glezen. It is well indexed and contains a very early map showing property-owners. The pamphlet, heavily bound and well printed, costs only \$1.15 postpaid. Address Mrs. H. B. Gould, Box 375 Huntington.

* * *

Gersham Saxton?

Mr. Alonzo Gibbs who with Mrs. Gibbs wrote the article "Powell's" Continued on next page

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Letters From Our Readers

(Continued From Page 11)

"Purchase Revisited" in the April Forum has received a letter from Mr. Leonard Sullivan of Stony Brook who is senior vice-president and chairman of the New York Genealogical Society. From the letter we quote:

"For many years I have been a subscriber to the Long Island Forum and I noticed with intense interest the article on the Powell's Purchase" in the April issue.

"My grandmother's name was Phoebe Saxton Powell, the daughter of Jarvis Powell and Deborah Saxton. After the First World War I spent much time going over the territory near Plainville in search of the Powell Burial Ground, which I eventually found. This is on a reservation of one-half acre which is now located alongside of the Grumman Air Plane Plant. Three of my grandfathers are buried there. I copied the headstones some 20 years ago, and I don't know whether you would be interested in having a copy of the same to send to Mr. Bailey. If so, I should be very glad to send it to you, also photograph.

"In your searches have you at any time run across the name of Gersham Saxton, who is buried in this burial ground? He was the father of Deborah Saxton Powell, wife of Jarvis. I have for over 30 years tried to find Gersham Saxton's father without success.

"In closing, may I compliment you on your article which is intensely interesting, and which I shall add to my Powell collection.

Two More Early Landmarks

Since writing our article, "Powell's Purchase Revisited" we have

come upon two more early landmarks. Directly in front of "The Little White Church in the Wildwood" at the point where Half Hollows Road meets Walt Whitman Highway, is a red oak which is indicated on the Samuel Willis Map of 1738 as a marker in the eastern boundary of the purchase. Further on, in Melville, at the foot of May's Hill on Old Country Road, is a concrete sump retaining Thomas Whitson's "Spring in the Hollow."

Iris and Alonzo Gibbs,
Bethpage.

Bank Gave Forum Subs

When I was a little girl of five my aunt, Mrs. Edwin Dayton, took me to the Union Savings Bank and

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Historic Long Island, Rufus R. Wilson. Illustrated. 8 vo, pictorial cloth. First edition. 1902.

History of N. Y. City. Over 100 illustrations. Thick 8 vo. 846 pages. Crude cloth. By Mary L. Booth, Yaphank's famous native daughter. First edition. 1859.

Just Hunting, by Harry T. Peters, illustrated, uncut. Published in 1935, this beautifully printed book, like all of the late author's works, is now a collector's gem.

Long Island Forum

deposited \$5 for me. I was very proud of my pass book and have always kept it intact although it was difficult through the lean college years.

In the summer of 1951 I was invited down to North Carolina to the home of one of our DAR proteges. My car was just three months old; no one had ever driven any car I ever had but myself, since my husband died, until that trip; I had never had an accident the many years I had been driving; I had never sat on the back seat of my own car before. But going around a steep bend in the Smokies, to avoid a head-on collision,

Continued on Page 116



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Little Church in the Wildwood, from Watercolor by Cyril A. Lewis

Grist Mill at Wading River

IT was John Roe Jr. who established the grist mill at the head of the Mill Pond at Wading River, and he had his own troubles in the doing.

The need for a mill in each new settlement was obvious and great, and its establishment watched with interest. Therefore the record is quite clear that in 1701 young Roe set about the purchase of a suitable piece of property, on the east fork of the "river," in the fairly new (vintage 1671) settlement of Wading River. He had already lived there for some time, and his father also.

On March 10, 1701, we find a bill of sale, from Joseph Hawkins to John Roe Jr. for a piece of land located, so he obviously thought, to advantage for his purpose, and, for a consideration of good and lawful money of the County of Suffolk, Province of New York, "fifty acres of land" were transferred to him.

He seems to have begun work almost at once, and was progressing nicely, when he ran into difficulty. For "after John Roe Jr. had come to the spot" described in the deed, and, to further quote the old records, "pitched upon it," it became apparent that he had made a mistake.

In a document bearing date of April 10, 1704, signed by "Timothy Brewster, Clerk of the Towne," we learn that "John Roe jr, finding that the fifty acres of land at the Wading River that he formerly pitched upon is within Mr. (Richard) Woodhull's patent, he hath now pitched upon fifty acres to be layde out upon his father's devison right as followeth, ten acres adjoining to his land where he is now dwelling, laying at the Wading River, and fourty acres adjoining to the south end of the fifty acres on which he pitched."

Evelyn Rowley Meier

Probably the two pieces concerned were nearby or adjoining pieces. It would seem that the old deeds were just as confusing to their contemporaries as they are to us, which would easily explain how anyone might "pitch upon" almost anything, and all in the best of faith.


The experience evidently taught young John something, for as soon as he picked him-

self up from the spot on which he had erroneously "pitched," and begun operations all over again on the new site, he went before the Brookhaven Town fathers, and received a formal granting of the "right" to establish a mill on the East fork of the stream at the Wading River, complete with the stipulation that a mill be set up within two years and be maintained continually. This was on May 4, 1708.

Roe's word, although he



Wading River's Old Mill



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naturally couldn't live to see it through, was as good as his grant, for from that time forth a mill ground the grist at the head of the Mill Pond, on the East fork of the river, for approximately two centuries.

Many owners followed in line of succession, a complete list of whom has never been compiled, but the last man to operate the mill was George Hawkins, and he lived on the North side of the Pond, just below the house in which the Halsey Gosmans now live.

It is an odd fact that it was a Hawkins who sold the property to John Roe Jr. for his mill in the first place, and it was a Hawkins who last operated it.

The Old Mill ceased activities at about the end of the last century, and fell into ruins with time. Now, if we look closely in the vicinity of the old dam, all we can find is a few scraps of iron, a mill wheel hardly worthy of the name, and a nostalgic feeling. Perhaps it is John Roe's ghost, come to haunt the spot in retaliation for all the trouble it made him.

Trapfishing

Continued from Page 109

these days; there they had it on a small scale. \$1,200 worth of gear demolished in

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Bunker Fishing, Peconic Bay

one hard gale—perhaps three times that much.

The fishing season started about the middle of March and before Thanksgiving Day all gear was stowed away for the winter. The owners worked during the winter months on twine for the coming season, while many of the younger crew members returned to the village school to finish their studies.

The powerboats with their beam trawls have about relegated this industry to the dim past.

Good luck to you and the Forum.
Mrs. A. W. Bruce, Brookhaven.

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Strong's Flatbush History

A GAIN I have been wandering among the pages of the Rev. Thomas Strong's History of the Town of Flatbush, and picking up odds and ends I thought might be of interest. I find that at first the Dutch gave special names to different parts of the Town. The north was called Steenraap (Stone Gathering) because there were so many small stones just below the surface. Part of the neck of land on which I live might be called that, for it seems to me we grow stones. But to return to Flatbush: The south end was called Rustenburgh, or the Resting Place. That was good farmland, and the middle was the Dorp or Town.

Of course we have all heard of sanding the floors, but Mr. Strong explains the whole custom. Twice a year the families brought from the beach enough sand to last the household six months. In the house the sand was swept out and the floor scrubbed twice a year, then the sand was brought in and placed in small heaps with cleared places between. Woe to the child who dared disturb the heaps. Then next day, the sand being dry, it was swept into patterns over the whole floor.

Mr. Strong wrote that the first rag carpet was made about fifty years before his history was published in 1842. It was woven by Adrian Hegeman for the widow of George Martense whose daughter Mrs. Catlin was living in Mr. Strong's day and she probably told him about it.

In 1681 a strange man who appeared in Flatbush was promptly arrested by the constable. As he could give no account of himself he was ordered appraised and sold. Not so good to be a stranger and friendless in those days.

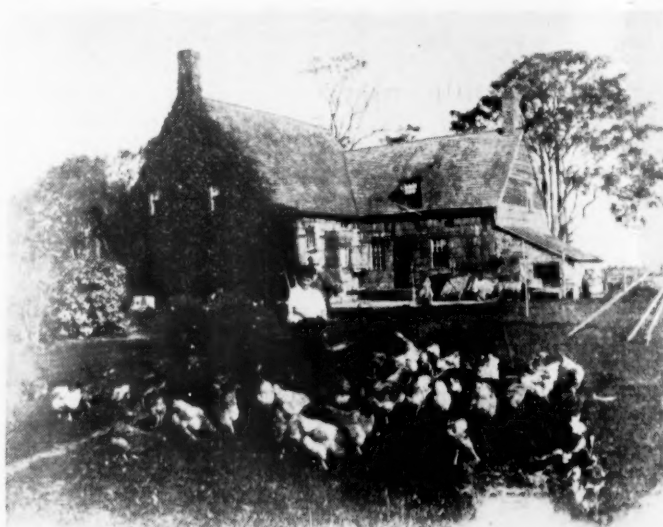
The first man who taught English in the Flatbush school was Petrus Van Steenburgh,

Kate Wheeler Strong

from 1762 to 1773. Of course many of his pupils were Dutch so he made a rule that those studying English should not

speak Dutch during school hours. The first one caught was given a pewter medal the size of a dollar. This was passed to the next one caught.

Continued on page 117



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Careers In The Wind

Many and varying fields of fashion and what they offer are the subject of the Annual Exhibition at the Traphagen School of Fashion June 8 through 16, which will be a presentation of student work. The exhibit which will be given in the galleries of the school at 1680 Broadway (at 52d Street), New York City, is to be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays and from 9 to 5 on Saturday, without charge, and readers of the Long Island Forum are cordially invited to attend.

The entire exhibition is arranged to demonstrate graphically the interlacing of the fashion industry's

point in interpreting all phases and techniques of illustration, and the steps of costume design from inspiration to finished garment. Traphagen's policy of cooperation with the trade is demonstrated by designs done in major competitions sponsored by manufacturers throughout the season—"All Weather" coats created for Sherbrooke Rainwear; dresses, coats, and sportswear designed in the contest conducted by makers of the new fabric, Hukabuk; and intriguing practical articles to be made from dish towels and wash cloths in a "Sew and Save" campaign launched by Lever Brothers. Prizes awarded were as high as \$500 for a single design.

Miss Edna Perkins, of Amityville, Long Island, (shown above) a member of this year's graduating class at Traphagen, recently had the honor of doing a group of illustrations for the New York World Telegram and Sun, while still a student. Her work will be included in the School's Annual Exhibition.

Letters From Our Readers

Continued from page 112

my boy turned over a 15-foot embankment.

Needless to say, my car was demolished to the tune of \$1500 and everyone of its five occupants had broken bones except myself who had only bruises and shock. The point of this story is that I immediately telegraphed to the Union Savings Bank of Patchogue, my girlhood home village, to wire me enough money to buy a new car, which was done.

Eleanor Train Low
(Mrs. John Low)
Freeport

Note: Mrs. Low is one of the Union Savings Bank's 50 year depositors to whom the bank presented yearly subscriptions to the L. I. Forum as a souvenir of the completion of its greatly enlarged and thoroughly modernized bank building. Editor.

* * *

Mississippi Namesake

***We particularly enjoyed the article "L.I. Mississippi Namesake." (From April Forum). (Miss) Mary Bean Byrd, Wildwood, Brookhaven, Mississippi.

* * *

Knows Brookhaven, Miss.

We were very much interested in H. P. Horton's article in the April issue of the Forum regarding Brookhaven, Mississippi. A year ago my wife and I spent a number of hours in Brookhaven and this year we touched the outskirts of the city.

We walked around the business district and found it well kept with

Continued on page 117



branches and the co-ordination between sketching, fashion design, the construction of clothing through draping, patternmaking, dressmaking, and the eventual merchandising by means of advertising, editorial illustration and display.

Covered in the show are the progressive steps in preparation for these careers, shown in completed classroom problems from both the Art and Clothing Departments and the Interior Decoration and Display Division at Traphagen. The exhibit stresses the trade view-

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Strong's History

Continued from page 115

and so on until the one who had the medal at the end of school took the punishment for all.

Apparently the master did not believe in thrashing. It was the boys' hands that felt the ruler, and it is said the master did a faithful job! During the Revolutionary War the school was taught by an Englishman, Gabriel Ellison. In order to fill certain jobs which brought him extra cash, he learned Dutch. Chorister was one of his jobs and it gave him a seat in the Deacon's pew.

One Sunday Pastor Van Sinderin preaching on the conversion of the Philippian Jailer, offered to wager that no one in the church could tell the meaning of the word "Stookwaarde." Ellison took the challenge and shouted, "Jailer, sir." As the dominy expected no answer, he was not pleased, and looking at Ellison with scorn said, "You must never talk when I preach."

One of Mr. Ellison's duties as sexton was to ring the church bell for services and also, during the war, as an alarm if danger threatened. Once in the middle of the night when word of danger came, in the dark he put on his wife's "calimane petticoat" and sped to the church.

Imagine the amusement of his neighbors who answered the alarm to find their schoolmaster in such a garb, pulling the bell rope. I guess his pupils snickered over it in private and I can't help wondering what his wife thought of it!

Letters From Our Readers

Continued From Page 116

clean streets, etc. We drove around some of the residential streets where there were large and comfortable homes. Although it is small in population and overshadowed by Natchez on the west and Jackson on the north it apparently is a trading centre for a considerable territory.

There is a splendid road from the north to New Orleans on the

outskirts of Brookhaven and a good road from here to Natchez. It has a much more northern appearance than you would expect in mid-Mississippi.

George G. Brainerd,
Setauket.

Something Very Special

I do think Julian Denton Smith's articles are something very special. I read slowly every word of "Listen to the Surf" in the April issue, and marvelled that someone had listened to the ocean so well, and had cared enough about what he heard to find expression for it. There is truly a Long Islander, in the true-love sense.

Nancy Boyd Willey,
Minneapolis, Minn.

Note: Mrs. Malcolm M. Willey is herself a true Long Islander and, like her famous husband, who is vice-president of the University of Minnesota, knows the ocean. They are the owners and summer occu-

pants of the Long Island Herald House, Sag Harbor.

"A Century of Service"

The above title is that of an attractive, well illustrated pamphlet issued in connection with the Centennial of the Sisters of St.

Continued on next page

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CARMAN HOMESTEAD, 1776
Massapequa, N. Y.

Letters From Our Readers

Continued from page 117

Dominic, Congregation of the Holy Cross, Brooklyn. It was issued, we understand, under the direction of Reverend Mother M. Anselm Ruth, O.P., Prioress General since 1943 of the Order.

The pamphlet contains a historical sketch of the Order since its creation in the year 1203. It was on September 2, 1853 that its first American unit was founded in Brooklyn.

The Brooklyn-Long Island Diocese of the R. C. Church was established the same year.

* * *

Village House, Orient

One of the truly outstanding historical and cultural attractions of eastern Suffolk County is Village House at Orient which will open July 1 and remain so through October. Open days are Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, from two to five p. m. There is no admission charged, and everyone is welcome to this old homestead of

Continued on back cover



Village House, Orient

Bailey's Long Island History

A limited number of sets of the Long Island History, compiled by Paul Bailey and first published in 1949 by the Lewis Historical Publishing Company of New York, has been made available through the Long Island Forum at one-third off the publishers' price.

This drastic reduction from the original price of \$46.50 is made possible by eliminating volume 3 which consists entirely of biographical sketches.

Volumes 1 and 2 comprise the complete History as compiled by Editor Bailey and written by leading authorities in every field, consisting of more than 1000 pages, 43 chapters and 200 illustrations.

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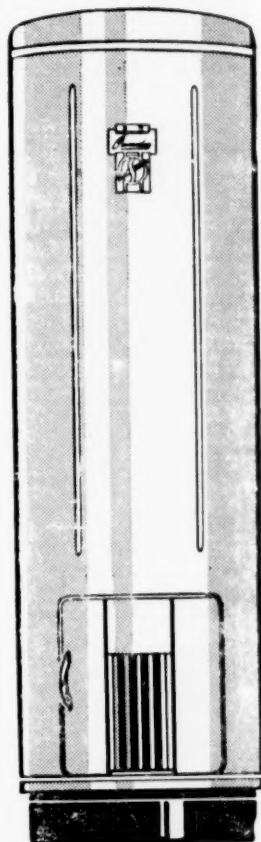
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CLOSED MONDAYS

Letters From Our Readers

Continued from page 98

Augustus Griffing, Southold town
historian of earlier days.

Besides the displays of LI-
Americana, there are exhibitions in
arts and crafts and, in fact, all
fields of local history and back-
ground. Village House is owned and
maintained by the Oysterponds
Historical Society of Orient, of
which George R. Latham is presi-
dent.

* * *

Traction Company History

Vincent F. Seyfried has written
the history of the New York &
Long Island Traction Company,
with chart, pictures and everything
to make it a really complete job.
The line ran through the south
shore of Nassau County as far east
as Freeport, also along Jericho
and Hempstead turnpikes, crossing
the county from Freeport to Min-
cola and taking in Roosevelt and
Hempstead.

* * *

Was Townsend Culper Jr.?

I am interested in the statement
of Mr. Blackman in the Feb. (1953)
Forum on page 26 that "Robert
(Townsend of Raynham Hall) was
one of Washington's spies." Does
he identify Townsend with the spy
who operated under the name of
Culper Junior? If so would he cite
any documentary evidence which
proves that Townsend was Culper.
Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood
Contributing Editor

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